



Connecticut Property Owners Alliance, Inc

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This testimony is submitted by Robert De Cosmo, president of the CT Property Owners Alliance Inc.

Our membership owns and operates approximately 13,000 apartment units in Connecticut and includes both owners and property managers.

We are commenting on SB #952 A.A.C Bed Bugs

Having recently dealt with this issue first hand at Pro Property Management, I can clearly say this is a no-win situation for all parties. In Connecticut we have a public health crisis with bed bugs and unfortunately it has become a landlord / tenant issue and thrust upon this housing committee to decide!

We know Bed Bugs are nearly impossible to irradiate with current permitted pesticides and the cost to treat an infestation compared to the results of successful treatment shows why this is problematic, there is a reported 30% failure rate as mentioned by DR. Gail Ridge.

The best hope for a workable solution is with longer-lasting and more effective chemical compounds used to treat infestations. To use heat treatment requires cooperation between the owners and tenants and sometimes this is just impossible. Natural organic treatments also seem to be effective and should not be ruled out if an owner wants to be environmentally friendly.

I would also like to a public information campaign be waged as once a tenant is told of an infestation, their reaction often is to throw out their items and demand the owner pay for new ones. Looking to assign blame or responsibility only heightens confrontation between an owner and tenant so the solution lies elsewhere.

We oppose both the reporting requirement to perspective renters once a treatment has occurred because it will brand the unit with a "Scarlet Letter" and most likely remain vacant for a long time as well as eliminating self-treatment for owners who choose to treat themselves.

We will work with this committee to seek common ground ideas and solutions on this issue.

Sincerely,

Robert J. De Cosmo
President, CTPOA, Inc.